



Higher National Qualifications

And

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Senior Verifier Report

2007

Subject: Learning and Development

Sector Panel or SSC: LLUK

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification which has taken place within Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications in this subject.

SVQ AWARDS

TITLES/LEVELS OF SVQ AWARDS VERIFIED

SVQs

Direct Training and Support Level 3
Learning and Development Level 3
Learning and Development Level 4
Management of Learning and Development Provision Level 4
Co-ordination of Learning and Development Level 4

PDAs

Certificate in Assessing Candidates using a Range of Methods
Certificate in Assessing Candidates through Observation
Certificate in Conducting Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process
Certificate in Conducting External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process
Certificate in Supporting Learning in the Workplace
Certificate in Delivering Training in the Workplace

Units

Assess Candidates using a Range of Methods
Assess Candidates through Observation
Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process
Conduct External Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process

FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

General comments:

External verification of the Assessor and Verifier Units

Centres have now become more familiar with the ethos of these units. They are showing a clearer understanding of the need to firstly ensure that assessors and verifiers have the opportunity to work to appropriate centre procedures - those that embrace the A and V Unit Standards. It is this kind of rounded approach that is required, and one that the external verifier group promotes as it encourages the A and V Units to be seen as codes of continual practice rather than just an individual's qualification.

There are still a number of queries that come through from centres in relation to the assessment of Non-SVQs (as a vehicle for achieving the A/V Units). This is partly because the criteria outlined in Guidance Note 10 in relation to the assessment of Non SVQs is still not widely known by centres. SQA plans to issue guidance to centres shortly on the assessment of non SVQs.

External verification of SVQs and PDAs in Learning and Development

Similar to A and V Units, centres are becoming familiar with the unit structure and evidence requirements.

Feedback from a number of centres and EVs suggest that there are problems with some of the mandatory units that make-up Levels 3 and 4. These units are the ones that require the facilitator-candidate to work with individual learners i.e. to agree learning programmes or design learning programmes. The design of

individual programmes is particularly difficult at level 4 where personnel tend to be much more attuned to the co-ordination or management of provision rather than being involved with individual learners. Similarly, many deliverers of training (at level 3) in many instances do not agree programmes with individual learners as this is often done before learners embark on a programme of learning.

These types of comments have been fed back through the EV Reports. It would be important though for centres to have the opportunity to feedback these comments back to LLUK once the review and consultation of these standards get underway.

Centre support

Centres have commented that SQA's Learning and Development Webpage has helped support them in implementing the A and V Units. In particular, the Professional Discussion DVD and recently developed Case Study entitled; *Aligning Centre Assessment and Verification Procedures with the Assessor and Verifier Units* has been well received.

SQA's Professional Development Workshops for the A and V Units have continued to be fully subscribed.

Areas of good practice:

Centres have generally become more confident in applying/interpreting evidence requirements. External verifier visits show that centres are building on their past experience and generally use the feedback they receive from previous EV visits very positively.

The A and V Units are starting to have a positive impact on many centres as they review and revise their assessment practices and quality assurance systems. In particular there has been a growth in the monitoring of assessment practice and in the development of bespoke Internal Verification Strategies.

Advice for further development:

External verifier reports highlighted that most development feedback is given in relation to the following areas (in order of frequency of feedback):

- 1. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
- 2. Standardisation meetings**
- 3. Assessment methods not covered**
- 4. Using the full evidence requirements/specification**
- 5. Quality of assessment planning and review with A/V-candidates**
- 6. Evidence of IV-Candidates being involved in external verifier visits**

1. CPD

Assessors and internal verifiers of Learning and Development SVQs/Awards/Units are required to undertake at least two updating activities per year.

The above is a CPD requirement laid down in the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy.

It is usually the case that assessors and verifiers can provide evidence that they have undertaken appropriate CPD, but many fall down on the recording of CPD. This means that the EV has to take a leap of faith especially where there is also no evidence relating to planning of CPD activities. It is recommended that CPD records include a planning section to show how centres intend to meet their CPD obligations.

Centres should also ensure that CPD plans are up to date. This is particularly important where the EV visit may be scheduled prior to the planned CPD taking place.

2. Standardisation meetings

Holding standardisation meetings/activities are a requirement of being an approved centre. However, a number of centres still present general assessor/verifier team minutes without any reference in them to any real standardisation activities such as cross-assessment etc.

There is evidence that centres are beginning to address this issue, (especially as more exemplars have become available i.e. through the A1 Unit Professional Development Workshop) however, there is significant criticism from centres (and justly so) in relation to the prescriptive way in which the evidence requirements have been written for this particular requirement. SQA will take this into consideration when the standards are being reviewed and will ensure LLUK is made aware of this point.

3. Assessment methods not covered (A1)

These are commonly overlooked as they are the end section in the evidence requirements and named 'Knowledge Requirements' (of evidence requirements) which can confuse assessor-candidates if they have already completed their 'Knowledge Requirements' (as part of the unit standards).

It is obviously important that candidates complete this section in full as knowledge of methods of assessment are integral to the achievement of the A1 Unit.

4. Using the full evidence requirements/specification

A number of centres have commented on the duplication between the wording in the evidence requirements and the wording of the performance criteria. This sometimes causes centres to provide their candidates with the evidence requirements in summary form only or keep the evidence requirements separate from the assessment recording materials – both situations borne from concerns by centres not wishing to overload their candidates with too much information, but causing some concerns for EVs about providing accurate specifications. Centres are reminded that they need to use the wording which appears in the unit specification in its entirety for the purposes of gathering evidence.

5. Quality of assessment planning and review with A/V-candidates

Assessors of the A and V Units are also role models for assessor/verifier-candidates. As such, their activities should exemplify good practice such as clear assessment planning with continuous and quality review. Some centres carry this out very well, whilst others still see this as a bit of a paper exercise.

6. Evidence of IV-Candidates being involved in external verifier visits

In order for internal verifier candidates to gain V1, they must take part in organising external verifier visits and managing subsequent feedback.etc.

Many centres are building this level of responsibility into their internal quality assurance systems which helps enormously. Where centres don't do this, evidence becomes something that is done to gain the unit which carries less value.

SQA's guidance for external verifiers has helped to clarify the EV's role in relation to sampling the work of internal verifiers who are working towards achieving their V1 Units. However, the achievement of V1 can be held up considerably in situations where regular annual EV visits have not taken place.

Centres need to forward plan to ensure that candidate- IVs are involved in EV visits so that they can generate the required evidence to achieve the V1 unit.